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IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Eighth Meeting of the Latin Club

The eighth regular meeting of the New York Latin Club is called for Saturday, February 28, at 12 M, in the Hotel Albert, corner of University Place and Eleventh street, New York. Professor E P Morris, of Yale University, will address the club on The Character of Cicero. All persons who are interested, whether teachers of Latin or not, are cordially invited to be present. The plan is to serve luncheon (50 cents a plate for everybody) at 12 M, promptly, so that there shall be no delay. The address will follow the luncheon, and adjournment will occur about 2 P M, *thus leaving the afternoon still unbroken for those who attend.* Please send a postal card at once to the Secretary, Mr A L Hodges, Hotel Albert, New York, if you intend to be present, so as to inform Mr Frenkel, the proprietor of the hotel, how many to expect. *Please attend to this at once.*

The Latin Club is very democratic in character and the above is the only sort of invitation that is issued.

Out-of-town teachers may find it convenient to be in the city on the day announced.

Information as to the conditions of membership in The Latin Club can be had at this meeting, or by referring to No 50 of THE LATIN LEAFLET, or by addressing the Secretary.

H F TOWLE, *President*
A L HODGES, *Secretary*

Professor Morgan's Address Before

The New York Latin Club

IN FOUR PARTS—PART III

This little story teaches another lesson. You will observe that Pompey did not leave the language of his inscription to be selected by his architect, but consulted those whose business it was to know about such things. It would be well if his example were followed in modern times. What extraordinary specimens of language and of the alphabet do our architects inflict upon us in their inscriptions on public buildings, and even upon university buildings. Take a simple point, this matter of Roman numerals. Since the twentieth century came in, how often we see MCM used for 1900. This is, of course, an

abbreviation, and is no more in place than an apostrophe and two zeros would be; or "naughty-naught" as the students call it. We do find abbreviations of numerals in Roman tombstone Latin, and in carelessly made inscriptions where the stone cutter has not carefully calculated his space; but I venture to say that we shall not find IV, IX, or similar abbreviations in any carefully made public inscription of the classical Romans. Then again, if our modern inscription is to be in the Latin language, the letter M should not be used at all; for, of course, it does not stand for the numeral until the second century A D. The proper numeral sign should be employed, which looks something like an 8 turned on its side. But if the inscription is to be English, why use *Roman* numerals in it? Our Arabic figures are far handsomer and infinitely less clumsy than the Roman numerals, and we can be pretty sure that the Romans, who were the most practical people that ever lived before Americans were invented, would have been quick to give up their bungling method had they been acquainted with the Arabic.

I have spoken of abbreviations. Much is to be learned from them in various ways. A very interesting deduction has lately been made from them by Professor Traube, the eminent Latin palæographer. There are, as you know, in the Vatican Library, two illustrated MSS of Virgil. About the age of one of these, the Romanus, there has been much discussion. Formerly it was thought to have been written in the fourth century; but more recently arguments have been adduced pointing to a later date, and now Traube has shown from certain abbreviations found in it that it cannot possibly be earlier than the sixth century.

The illustrations of these two MSS of Virgil deserve, I think, far more attention than is paid to them in the teaching of Virgil in our schools. In one or two of our editions there are rude cuts in outline made from pretty old engravings from them; but these give you no idea whatever of the originals, which are not outline drawings, but regular paintings in the miniature style. The Vatican Library, under the very liberal new policy of his Holiness, the present Pope, himself a Latin scholar of much ability, has lately published photographic facsimiles of these two MSS including all the illustrations. Unfortunately the edition is limited in number and the price is high, but the books ought to be found in every great library: *e g*, that of Columbia University. It would add greatly to the interest of schoolboys and schoolgirls who are studying Virgil if they had copies of these ancient pictures before them. And in these days of universal photography it ought not to be a difficult thing to bring to pass. The teacher might get permission to make photographs with his own camera from the library copy of the book, or if he is not himself an expert in photography, he is pretty sure to find among his

pupils or acquaintances somebody to do it for him. Or this club might cause a set of photographs to be made and sold at a nominal price to its members. There is an excellent article in French by De Nohlac about the pictures, which might well be translated to accompany them if the scheme which I have suggested were carried out.

But to return to Cicero: not only was he doubtful about some points, but we are much more doubtful about many points which concern him or the understanding of his writings. For instance, we talk of the style of Cicero, as if he had but *one* style. But what does he say about this himself? At the age of sixty, he thus writes to Papirius Paetus:

"What do you think about my style in letters? Aren't they in the *sermo plebeius*, the vulgar tongue? Yet one doesn't use the same tone in all his writings. For what analogy is there between a letter and a speech in court, or an address at a public meeting? Even in court I don't make a habit of handling all my cases in the same style. Private suits of slight importance I plead in the plainer style; those that affect a man's civil status or reputation, in the more ornate style; letters I compose in the language of everyday life—*verbis cotidianis*."

Here, then, are at least three different styles which we may expect to find at the same period in our great model, and this ought to be—but isn't—a warning to those who think that they can reach the exact date of a speech from the style employed in it. And then another interesting question about Cicero: what was his personal feeling about religion? This is one of the most difficult questions to answer about any man; on no topic is a man really more reserved, open or even dogmatic as he may seem to be. We may be pretty sure that the real Cicero does not express himself openly about his personal religion in his public speeches; and in his philosophical works he is rather the expounder of systems, of theories, and then again of ethics, than of religion in the strictly personal sense. There remains to us no source of knowledge on this point except the collection of over 700 of Cicero's *Letters*. I have looked them through this summer in the hope of gleaning information on this and several other subjects in which I am interested. I can tell you therefore from my own observation that there are only a few passages in the letters which throw any light on the subject of Cicero's personal religion; and that of these only two seem to me very significant. Both are addressed to his wife,—but who can mention her without pausing for a moment to marvel over that other puzzle of Cicero's divorce of Terentia after over 30 years of married life, when he was more than 60 years old, followed as it soon was by his marriage with a rich young girl, his ward, and his prompt divorce of her? But we have no time for this interesting problem to-day. The first of the two passages in the letters to which I have referred was written by Cicero in one of those moments of despair and bitterness when the heart speaks out. On his way into exile he writes back from Brundisium to Terentia: "I only wish, my dear, to see you as soon as possible and to die in your arms, since neither the gods whom *you have worshipped* with such pure devotion, nor men, whom *I have spent my time in serving*, have made us any return." This difference between the faith of a woman and the worldliness of a man is only too often illustrated

in our modern life. The other passage is of a similar nature, though it was written nearly ten years later. He had been melancholy, anxious, and a burden to those about him; "but all these uneasy thoughts", he writes, "I have got rid of and ejected. The reason of it all I discovered the day after I parted from you. I threw up pure bile during the night, and was at once so much relieved that it seemed to me some god worked the cure. To this god, you, after your wont, will make full and pious acknowledgment."

No intention expressed, you perceive, of making any such acknowledgment himself. This function is to be left to a woman.

These two passages which I have called significant may seem slight evidence on which to base one's opinion of a man's attitude toward religion, and they would indeed be slight were it not that they fall in exactly with the general attitude of educated men in the age in which Cicero lived. Perhaps there never was an age in which unbelief was wider spread. The genuine old Roman gods (except Lares, Penates and Genius, that is to say except the family gods) were all but forgotten, and the proper way to worship them had become a topic for antiquarian research. The Romans of course had never had a mythology of their own such as the Greeks had—that is, a history of the dealings of divine beings with one another and with men. What is sometimes thought of as Roman mythology—I mean the stories found in Virgil, Ovid and Horace about gods and heroes—are all Greek, not Roman at all, and in Latin literature they really belong later than the time of Cicero. These Greek stories were commonly regarded, Cicero says, as idle tales. In his day the best educated men were sceptics or rationalists. Thus we see that even these two little passages may be considered as pretty trustworthy indications of one side of the character of Cicero.

It goes without saying that the letters are a perfect mine of information on all sorts of topics relating to the character and life of Cicero. For example: it is very interesting to read, in such confidential epistles as he wrote to Atticus, what he himself thought about his own speeches; how he laughed over the way in which he threw dust in the eyes of a jury; or how thickly he laid on the paint in ornamenting his account of the Catiline affair. Then again his relations with Julius Caesar come out most clearly in the letters which passed between them, or in Cicero's letters to others about Caesar and Caesar's views of *him*. What a pity that we do not try to bring these two men more closely together in our teaching. We deliberately separate them. We set them in different years of the school course and give our boys no chance to see how they played into each other's hands or against each other. We lead our boys to think of them as always the deadliest foes; but the two had much in common. Both were lovers of literature. But what schoolboy ever hears of Caesar as a literary man? They think of him as a soldier, or as a constructor of grammatical puzzles. And here again I yield to the temptation to speak of a point of syntax—but it shall be the last—and indeed I foresee that I am approaching the end of these somewhat rambling remarks. The point to which I now refer concerns the expression of the apodosis of a condition contrary to fact in indirect discourse. What a pity it was that Caesar allowed

himself to write the sentence which stands in the 29th chapter of the fifth book, which is, being translated, as follows:

"(He said) that he thought Cæsar was gone into Italy; otherwise, the Carnutes would not have formed their design of killing Tasgetius, and the Eburones, if he were at hand, *would not be coming* against the camp."

Here for *would not be coming* we have *venturos esse*—and this unfortunate phrase has led to a special category in almost all our grammars. We are led by them to think that this is one of the regular ways of expressing in direct discourse an apodosis of action non-occurrent. But the fact is, I believe, that this is the only place in any Latin author where such a rule is borne out. In every other passage of the kind we have the future participle with *fuisse*. In my school grammar I have ventured to give an explanation of this unique phenomenon in Cæsar. In that passage, the *context* clearly shows that *venturos esse* represents the imperfect subjunctive of the direct discourse. But ordinarily the future participle with *esse* might seem to represent a future indicative. Hence, I believe that to avoid ambiguity the Romans did not try to express present time in apodoses of this kind in indirect discourse. It was easy to avoid them, and we ought to teach our boys to do so.

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